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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND  
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HEALTH

OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

March 17, 2020

The Honorable David Price  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development and Related Agencies  
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building,  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart,

As you consider appropriations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, we respectfully request that the Subcommittee include report language directing the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to report on public housing stock nationwide that is compliant with the Fair Housing Amendments Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, including public housing stock built before 1991 as referenced by the Fair Housing Act of 1988.

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act specifically mandates that all federally assisted new construction or substantially renovated existing housing units include mobility accessible features for 5% of the units and 2% for people with sensory disabilities. However, accessibility compliance still remains limited for these developments and for public housing built or renovated prior to the application of the above-referenced laws.

Over 2.6 million Americans live in public housing, many of whom are people with disabilities. As you are aware, people with various functional limitations and disabilities often experience poverty, thus increasing the likelihood that they will need affordable, low-income and public housing. Yet affordable, accessible housing is extremely scarce and public housing nationwide fails to meet the needs of people who require accessibility.

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the largest Public Housing Agency (PHA) in the country, has struggled to meet accessibility guidelines for its public housing stock. Based on one 2015 study commissioned by NYCHA, it will cost over \$505.8 million to meet the 5% threshold targeted by NYCHA's Voluntary Compliance Agreement with HUD.

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It is imperative that we take affirmative steps toward recognizing the nationwide dearth of accessible public housing and commit resources to meeting the need. Therefore, we respectfully request the Subcommittee include the following language in the report accompanying the FY2021 appropriations bill:

*The Committee directs the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, not later than 180 days after enactment of this Act, to submit to the Committees on Appropriations and the House Financial Services Committee and the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs a report identifying the quantity of public housing stock nationwide that is compliant with federal accessibility standards, including public housing stock built before 1991 as referenced by the Fair Housing Act of 1991.*

*The report shall assess the challenge HUD faces and the costs associated with helping PHAs to come into compliance with existing fair housing requirements. The report shall assess the cost to make existing public housing portfolio accessible, and examine opportunities for improving accessibility in public housing, including opportunities for cost-savings, incorporating engineering best practices for retrofitting existing stock, and spurring non-governmental investment. The report shall also examine the feasibility of increasing the amount of accessible public housing to 10% accessible to people with mobility disabilities and 4% accessible to people with sensory disabilities throughout a housing authority's housing portfolio.*

We see a clear opportunity to improve upon low-income housing and support public housing residents by investing resources in conducting a report on public housing stock nationwide to ensure compliance with the Fair Housing Amendment Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Max Rose  
Member of Congress